village money lenders by mortgaging their ration cards. The ration cards in most cases were with incomplete details.

BPL Families in Himachal Pradesh

2252. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the families living below poverty line have been identified in Himachal Pradesh for coverage under the Centrally sponsored schemes like Antodaya Anna Yojana etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any study has been conducted to find out their purchasing powers; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government in this behalf?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Himachal Pradesh has identified 79,000 families under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Additional storage capacity in Orissa

2253. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any request has been received from Orissa for approval of construction of additional storage capacity under the 7 year guarantee scheme of FCI;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) by when a decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU):

(a) Yes Sir. The Govenment of Orissa had submitted a proposal on 31.12.2001 for creation of additional storage capacity (covered) of 2 lakh MTs, and on 30.4.2002 for 1 million tonnes.

(b) and (c) The Government has already conveyed its approval to offer gauarntee for construction of 2.5 lakh MTs additional storage capacity (covered) in Orissa under Seven Years Guarantee Scheme to Managing Director, FCI on 10.1.2002.

The proposal for creation of 1 million tonnes additional storage capacity under Seven Years Guarantee Scheme in Orissa was examined in the Ministry and not found justified. However, the Chief Secretary Government of Orissa has been requested to give location-specific details of drought prone and calamity prone areas of the State.

Demand for abolition of FCI

2254. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether some farmers associations and leaders are demanding abolition of Food Corporation of India in view of its high operative and administrative costs;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the action proposed to Facilitate development of the post harvest infrastructure for storage, processing, transport and export of agricultural produce?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) Yes Sir; Shri Sharad Joshi has given a representation where, *inter alia*, he has asked for abolition of FCI and its privatisation.

(b) There is no proposal of the Government to abolish or privatize the FCI.

(c) A National Policy on Handling, Storage and Transportation of Foodgrains has already been announced by the Government to reduce post harvest losses in foodgrains and to modernize the system of handling, storage and transportation of foodgrains.